

MARVEL

002

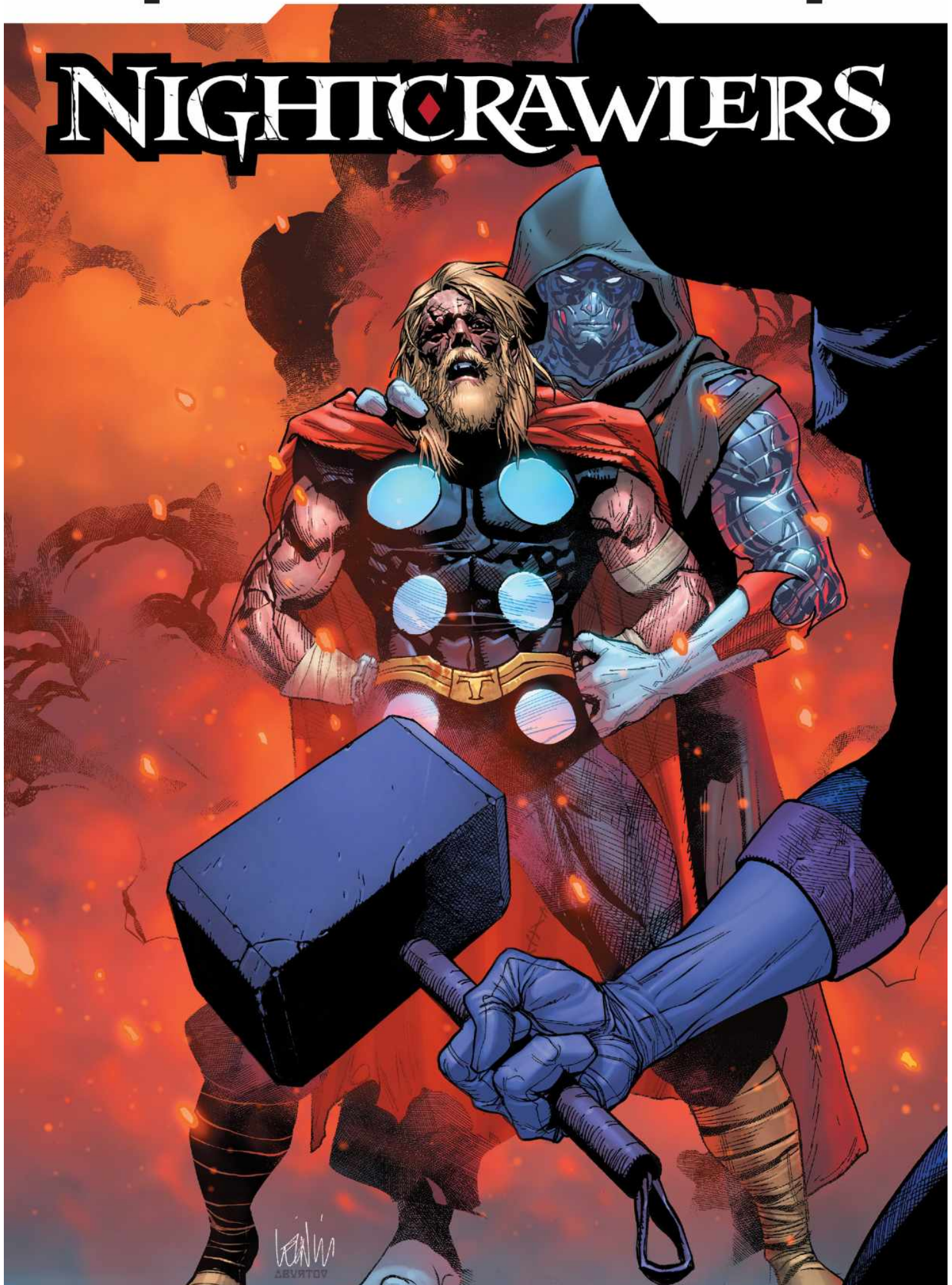
SINS OF SINISTER

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SPURRIER
DI VITO
CHARALAMPIDIS

NIGHTCRAWLERS

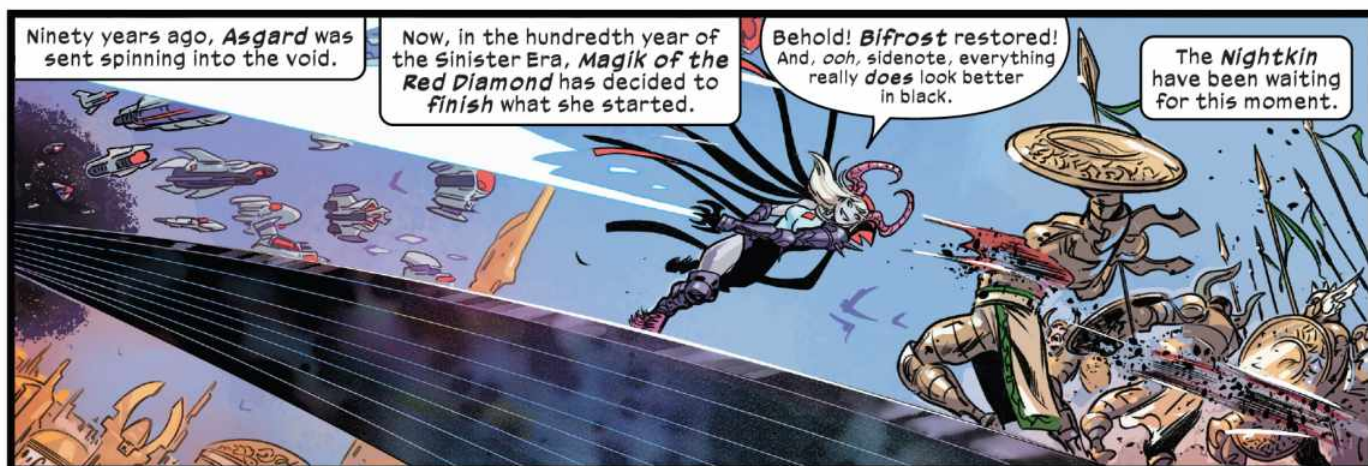




3. Blessed Be The Nightgene.



2. Blessed Be The Reliquary Perilous.



1. Blessed Be The Spark.





--we know only
one way to live.

Dancing between the
raindrops of war.

It has been decades
since I was freed
from the Diamond.
Since I was *reborn*
in the suit of
Hearts.

Everything
has changed.

Plundeeerrrrr!

Nothing has
changed.



And then? The *system killers*. Fusions of *Legion*, *Proteus* and *Polaris* tortured beyond sanity.

They say *he* was there in *S.E. 89*, tittering at the *pun*, when the first *Heirburst Bomb* hit Xandar's sun.

We were too busy to look up.

The death scream of the Xandarian *Worldmind*, Mother. Thirty-two of us died recording it to your specifications...

Mm. Can't make an omelet without a trail of corpses. Stick it on the *pile*, eh?

Only a matter of time before our reputation came to precede us.

SCAVENGERS!

Thou shalt *NOT* deprive Asgard of its sacred *arms* in the hour of need!

Wh-what's...
B-be still, curse thee, or--

"Sacred arms."

A poor choice of words.

SNIKT

UAAAAA--



Lie still, Thunderer. Your world is doomed. Only we can purge the Diamond.

Wh...
www...

Only we may build the *Reliquary Perilous*. A weapon to cleanse the Sinister Strain from this universe, made from the distillate of holy artifacts.

B-brainwashed fanatics...y-you have imperiled us for *nought*! There are *none* among you worthy of taking *Mjolnir*!

True. Still... an *unliftable object* must fall toward *something*. Is that not so, *Lost-In-Shadow*?

Yes, Sister. By the Spark of my genes, I may determine its *gravitational pull*.

It will fall as we wish. *Good*.

Nightkin! Homeward! Speak the liturgy of *regret* and imbibe the *Cortez Sacrament*!

Spark be with you, *Lastfather*.

No...
no...

We lose two of our finest at the regrouping point, as the *Frost Giants* condense from vapor.

...*Fimbulwinter*...

BAMF

BAMF

BAMF

And Asgard is lost forever.

One hundred years have passed since Mister Sinister gained control over humanity and mutandom through the use of Moira MacTaggart clones as "save points" to conduct his genetic manipulation experiments on the mutant resurrection process -- some of his more notable experiments being the Nightkin, specialized assassins created by combining Nightcrawler's DNA with other high-powered mutants.

However, something about Nightcrawler's host DNA has proven resistant to Sinister's programing. And when the Nightkin became freed from their creator, Mother Righteous swooped in to claim their loyalty.

But as Wagnerine and the rest of the Nightkin follow this new leader they must ask themselves -- is Mother Righteous leading them to riches -- or just more ruin?



NIGHTCRAWLERS

PART 5: "THE APOSTATE"

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...but from the hubris
of a single Earth man.

And the test subjects are taking over. Long ago, Sinister secretly introduced his own parasitic personality into the DNA of mutantkind. Now their leaders are at the forefront of a vast genetic conquest.

The few remaining cultures capable of defiance stumble into an uneasy coalition, home systems annihilated, fleets hunted. And smaller, stranger resistances bloom. Free mutants strike from the galaxy's edge, while a cult of Sinister's own creations, somehow breaking his genetic control, gather objects of power and lay their curious plans in the shadows...

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The Narthex.

Uprooted from the corpse of *Krakoa* in the twilight days of *Earth*.



An ember, borne through the void by the *Chamber Nocturne*.

Not *much* of a home, for sure--but the only one we know. And a sanctuary to *travelers* of a stranger aspect.

Herald... welcome back.



The *Legate* awaits you.

Hm. Her mood?

Grim.

I wonder what he thinks as he walks among us. Listening. *Enumerating.*

It has been two years since he brought fresh *novitiates*. There are but *53* of us now.





A terrible, brief beauty.

The Cyclops Chimera... he was the father?

yes.

(A tender lover. I believe he would have made a fine parent.)



And yet... it wasn't the loss alone that broke him. Not fully.

We are born in the Spark. We return to the Spark.

Follow the sinless child, who leapt unto the very stars to redeem the night!



I...I don't understand--

Mother Righteous rewrote our tragedy. The child is now at the core of the faith.

How can Summernight recover from a tragedy he's expected to celebrate?



By the Mother's grace do we serve...

...by the providence of Auntie Fortune do we find our rest...

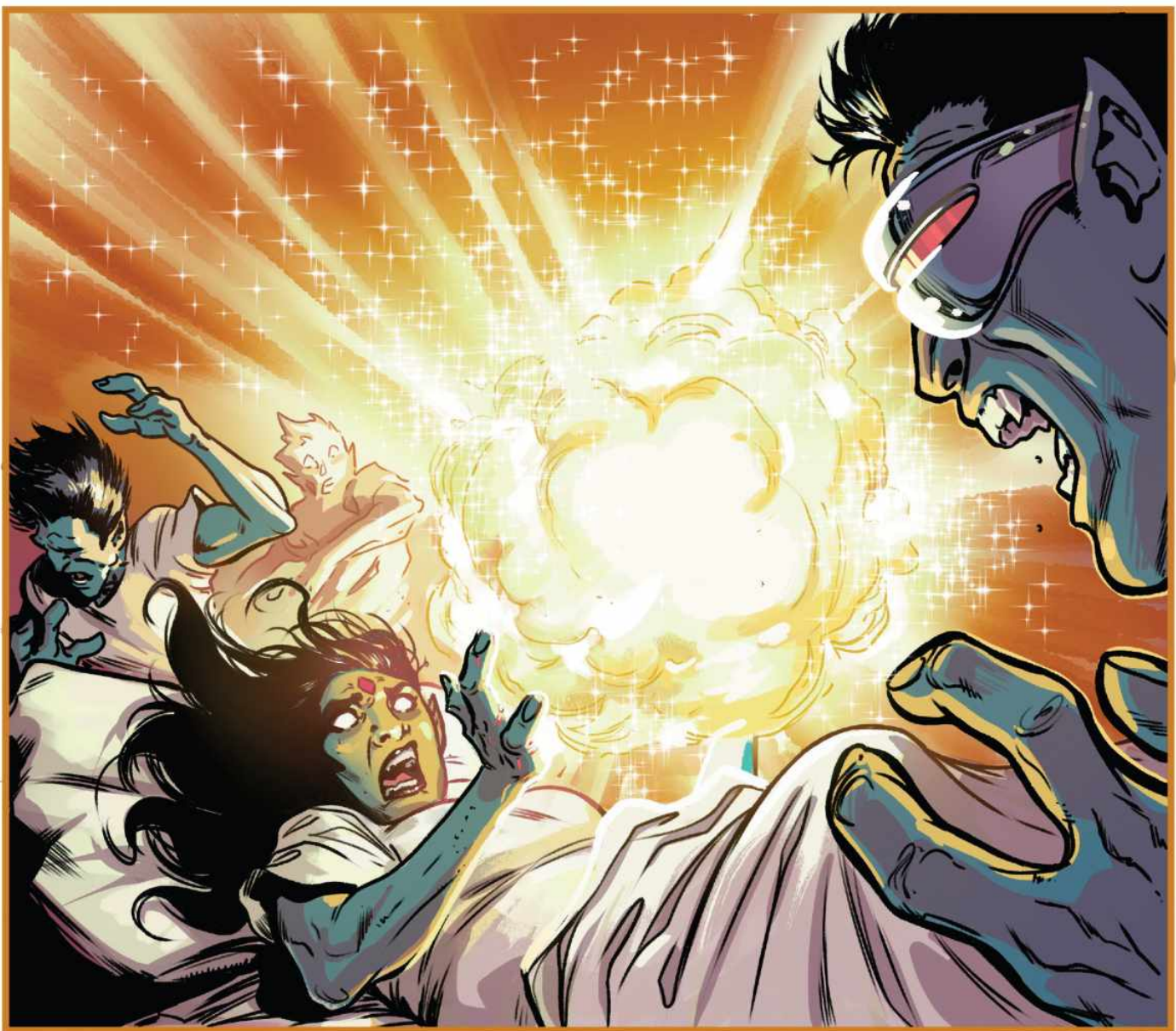
...C...come... h...hold my h-h-hands... leap lucky...



He glances at me before he goes. But he is not looking. Not really. We are both seeing the same thing.



My...my baby, she's-- she's glowing. Wh-why is sh--?



A birth reflex. Like opening dazzled eyes or a first faltering breath. Directionless. Impossible to trace where she went.

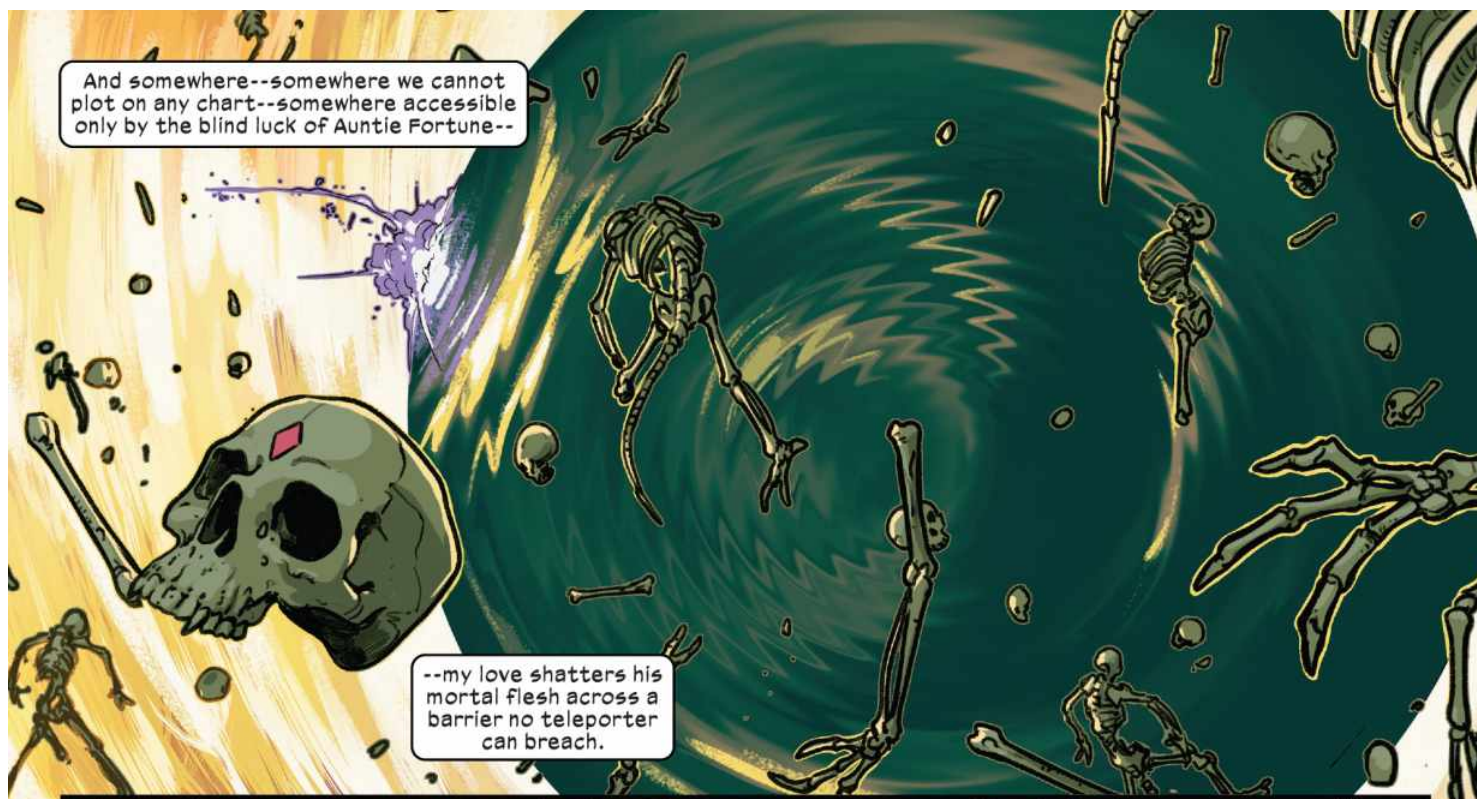
The heart of a star? The endless void? Did she feel fear? Did she feel alone?

Pointless thoughts. *Ghastly* thoughts that I have recirculated so often, I am numb to their poison.

She is gone. That is the point. She is gone, and so is half of my heart--



--and today, I lose all that remains.



And somewhere--somewhere we cannot plot on any chart--somewhere accessible only by the blind luck of Auntie Fortune--

--my love shatters his mortal flesh across a barrier no teleporter can breach.



Blessed be Summernight...blessed be Summernight, who has returned to the Spark...

Sinister's lab...

None of the newer acolytes even know what it is. Only that *this* is what the Mother calls a righteous death.



Legate...your lover's loss... his *pain*...I can't imagine what you must be f--

I heal, Herald. Haven't you heard?



There is no pain.

...But rage? Oh, yes.

Sure, the news ain't too cheery from *out there* either, lass. We've searched high n' low...can't find a single *Crawler* hybrid.

We believe the Sinisters have *realized* there is some--quirk of spirit--that makes the *Wagner strain* susceptible to *emancipation*.

So they are simply not *making us* anymore. Hm.



We are *failing*, Vox Ignis. We run low on the flesh of *Cortez* to extend our leaps--and lower still on new thieves to use it.

I had hoped my d... dau...

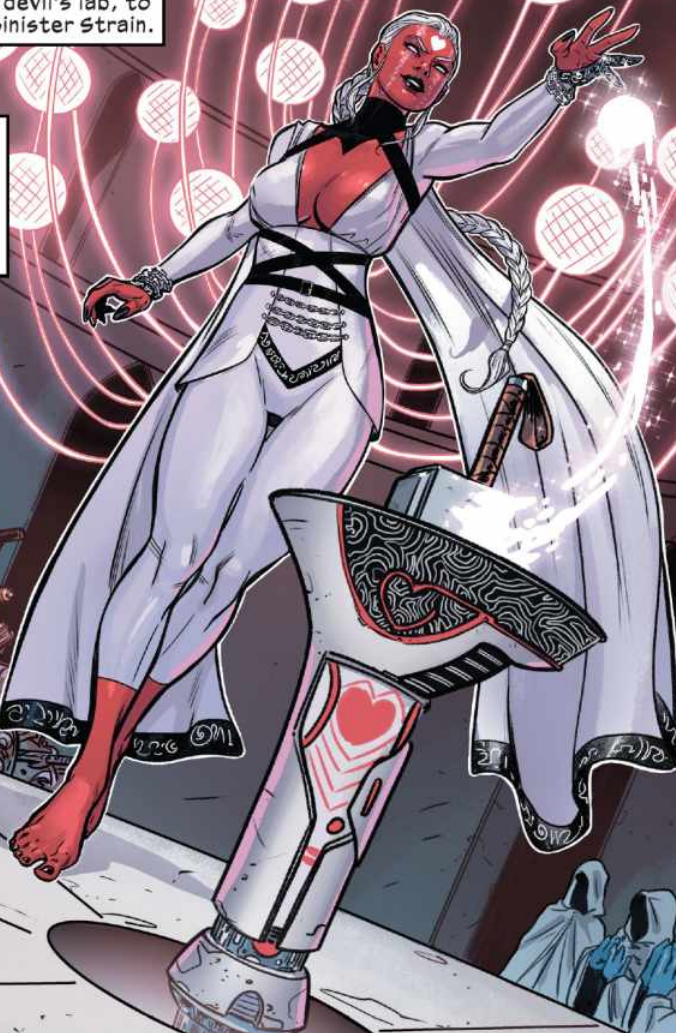
I had hoped she would be the first of many born of love. As it is...? We will die out *long* before the *Reliquary Perilous* is complete.

"The list of *sacred items* needed to build it grows ever longer.

"Mother Righteous says that it must be carried *within* the devil's lab, to purge the Sinister Strain.

"She says she knows how to gain entry, but...she is *vague*. And the younger *Nightkin* are satisfied not to wonder.

"It is heresy to *doubt*, but... I beg you...I *must* know..."



For what *great purpose* has she stolen my loss?



...
I've watched her visit folks, down the decades.

People *untouched* by the Diamond. Rebels... survivors...she asks 'em *all* the same



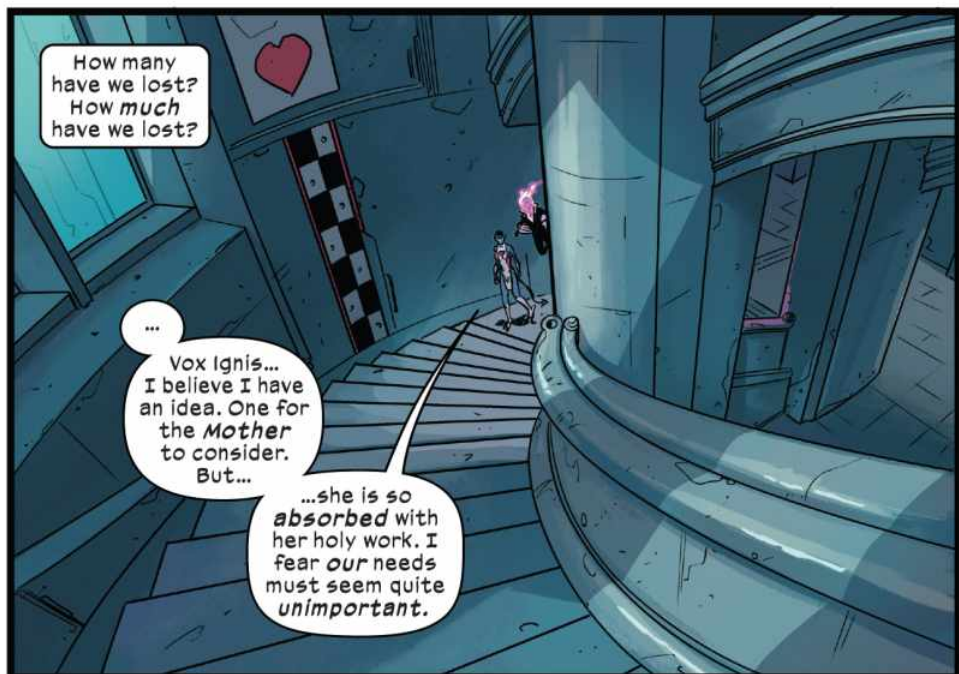
What would you have done differently?

"I don't know *why*. But...I'll tell ye





Heading toward the light.



How many have we lost?
How *much* have we lost?

...
Vox Ignis...
I believe I have an idea. One for the *Mother* to consider.
But...

...she is so *absorbed* with her holy work. I fear *our* needs must seem quite *unimportant*.



"I wonder... might it sound *better* coming from you?"

Oh, fer pity's sake... Do I *really* 'ave to leave a "*Do Not Disturb*" sign on the bleedin' stairs, or--

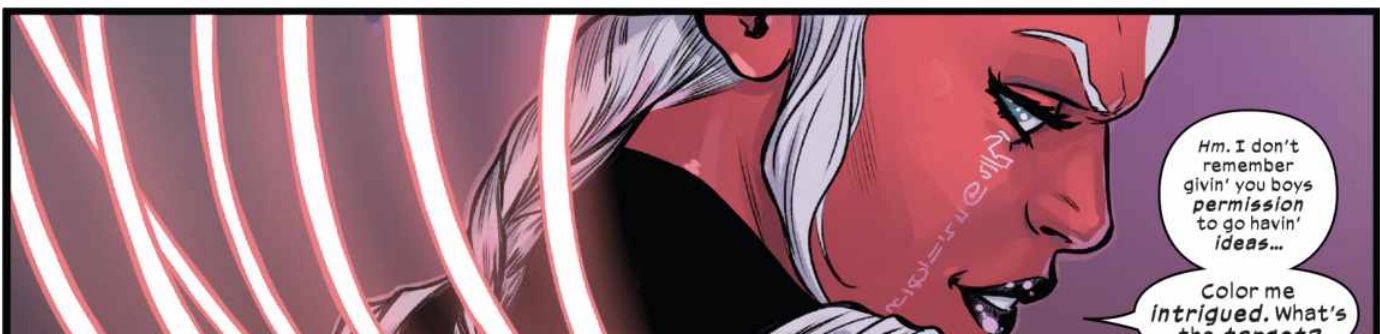
Apologies, holy mother. I seek your sanction for a *pilgrimage*.



"The Nightkin are *dwindling*, Mother. They *worship* you-- they wish only to fulfil your designs--"

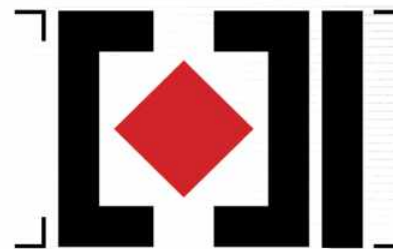
"Huh. *Flattery*, is it? *Do* go on."

"--but they will not last long. I have thought of a way to reverse the trend."



Hm. I don't remember givin' you boys *permission* to go havin' *ideas*...

Color me *intrigued*. What's the *plan*?



TERRA

SINISTER STUDIES / Experimental Timeline Progress Log **[99 years / 11 months / 22 days since activation of Moira save point #7]**

The abandonment of Earth was never a formal policy, per se, though with hindsight, we were disengaging emotionally from the dreary little pebble quite early on. One must eventually outgrow one's alma mater or be forever doomed to owe it one's gratitude. Unconscionable.

As I've recorded before, in perhaps somewhat vexed tones, the Council's vote to concentrate aggression outward was...not to my taste. One can understand the treacherous little bastards' logic, of course. Their long-termism is based on the assumption that they're stuck in this pigsty timeline, where mine is based on getting my bloody Moira clone back so I can hit reset and start over.

For now, alas, theirs must be the policy of first recourse, though it really is a frightfully soggy pretext. "Stomp the aliens before they come for us" has some merit, I grant you, but I know how these sweaty facsimiles really think. Collaborate, expand, backstab, dominate, repeat. We'd knocked out several imperial homeworlds and a couple of the less interesting parallel realities -- all courtesy of my Chimera, natch -- before any of them even dared shrug and admit it wasn't about pre-emptive defense anymore, if it ever was.

Ironically, it was exactly the sort of Big Dumb Alien Invasion they'd theorized that eventually ended mutantkind's sojourn on the third cinder from the sun. It was already getting rather stuffy, tbh -- there's only so much carbon one can pump into one's continental clone factories -- but the Brood/Annihilus incursion soured the price of real estate even faster than expected. They came out of some clever singularity gate by the Oort cloud and were all over the planet like a rash before we knew it.

None of the Quiet Council was actually there, of course. Things to do, places to bomb. I often wonder if the insectoid idiots actually realized they were invading a near-dead planet or if they'd spent so long laying plans in some ghastly hive hole somewhere they simply hadn't kept up with the galactic news. Wish I'd seen their faces.

Well, anyway. We emptied the factories by remote, flipped the plasma cores and filled the ionosphere with debris. No ships in, no ships out. I do sometimes wonder what it's like down there these days. Last time I glanced at the scanners, the Kenji Uedo serum (very useful for rendering biomass and feeding the troops; not much of a conversationalist) was making a concerted stab at turning itself into a space elevator somewhere near the Galápagos Islands, so I daresay one can't get a decent G&T down there anyway. What other point did it ever have?

Earth. New Essex.
(Formerly New York.)

I was created here.
This *tumor-place*.

Here, in this laboratory-city
of meat and radiation, the
last rebellions were fought.

BAMF

BAMF

BAMF

BAMF

Keep
jumping, my
Nightkin. North
by northeast.
Fifty miles.

The Devil is long gone,
of course. Physically
speaking. Nothing of him
remains but his terrors--
and his errors.

The things that fed
his curiosity as they
grew grotesque--

--and the
things that
outlasted
his childish
attention.

Second choir--
seek *Cortez flesh*.
First choir--lay *hands*.
We go *down* to the
tunnels below.

Even a
reject can
be holy.

Uff. About
damn time. I
hope you brought
coffee.

Now *listen*...you
imbeciles will be tempted to
jettison some of my beautiful fungal
brain matter while you free me, but
you simply cannot comprehend how
brilliant my mycological computing
power has become, so I *insist* that
you *carefully untangle* every
last fiber from the--

Cut him
out. No need
to be gentle. Then
lay hands
again.

"He is not the *only*
monster the Great
Devil left behind."

BAMF

Mph. Home
already? Did
you find your
target?

Yes, Mother. It is lucky that
I discovered Doctor Nemesis'
location all those decades ago.
He believes that--with a little
time to regrow--

...Th-them cut
fungusbrain...them make
stupid me...

--he will be able to
propagate *new*
members of
our tribe.

So you
can serve me
for *centuries*?
Lovely. Blessed be
the holy fungi,
etc.

Actually, Mother--as it
happens--the Doctor was
not our real target.

(Always the
stated goal--
and then the
true one.)

We have
another guest. I
have explained the

BAMF





Spark is
chaaaaange.

Spark is
joyyyyy.

Spark is
ideeeeee.



Not
CONTR--

Not
MISSION!

Not
WEAPON!

Abomination.

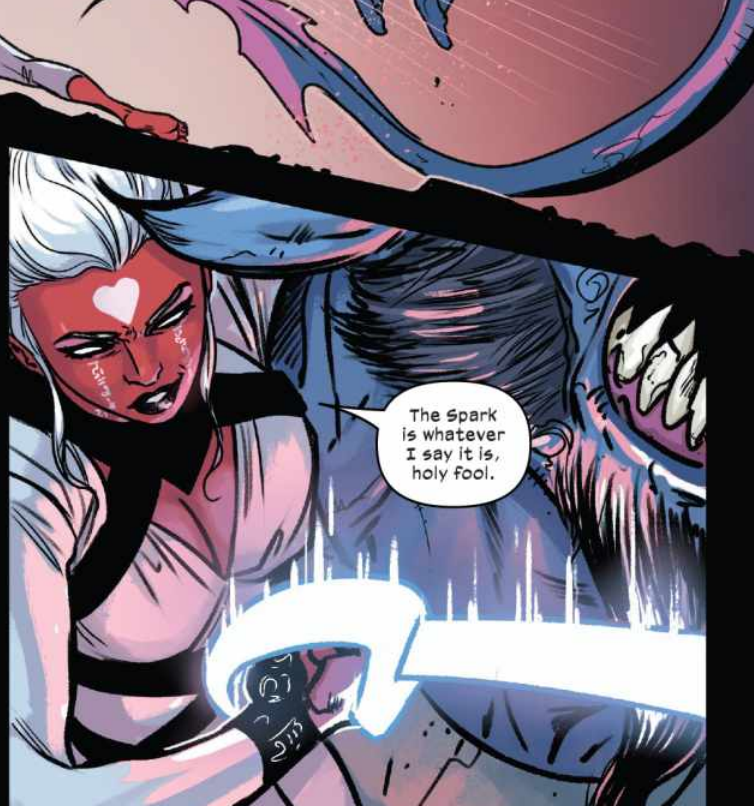


The original
Nightcrawler.
Hmph. It's takin' all
your concentration
just to form words,
innit? Dismal.

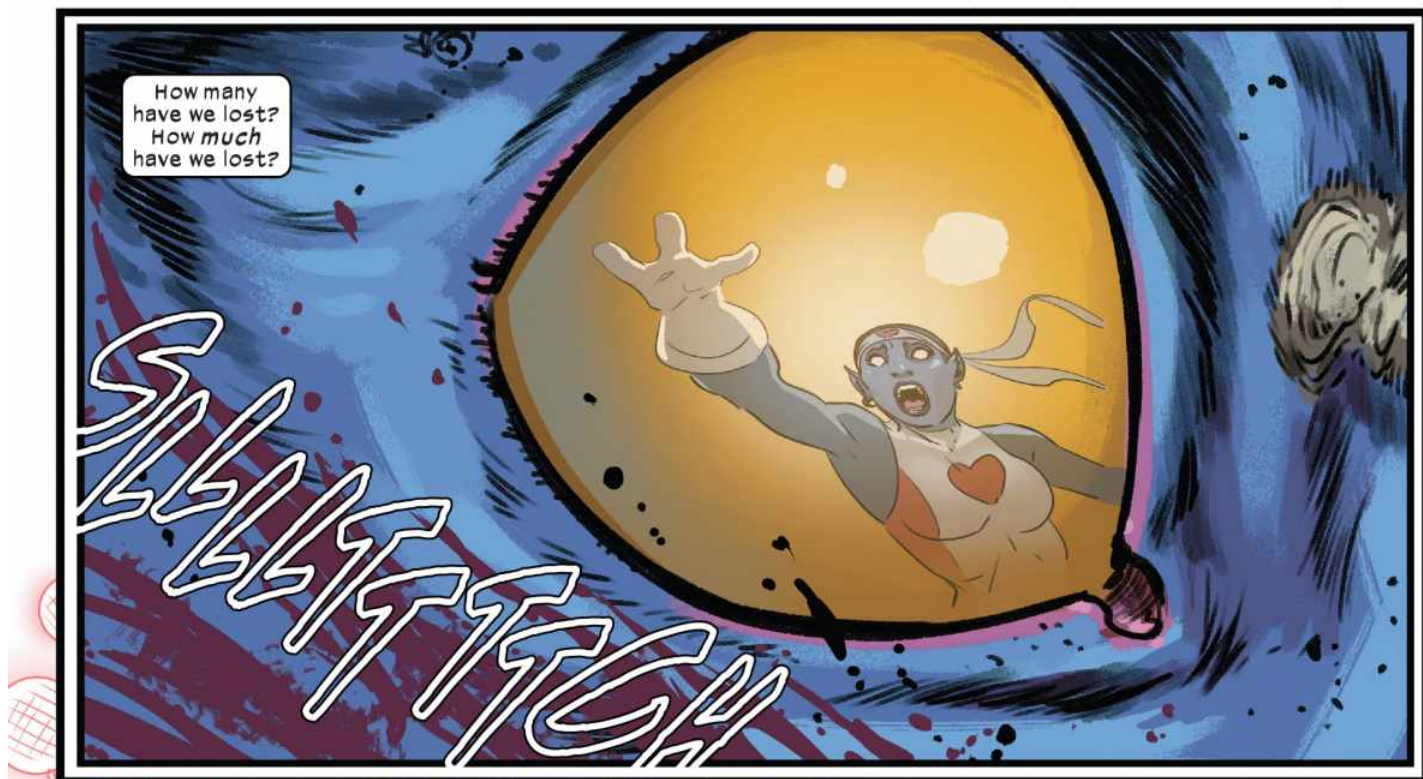


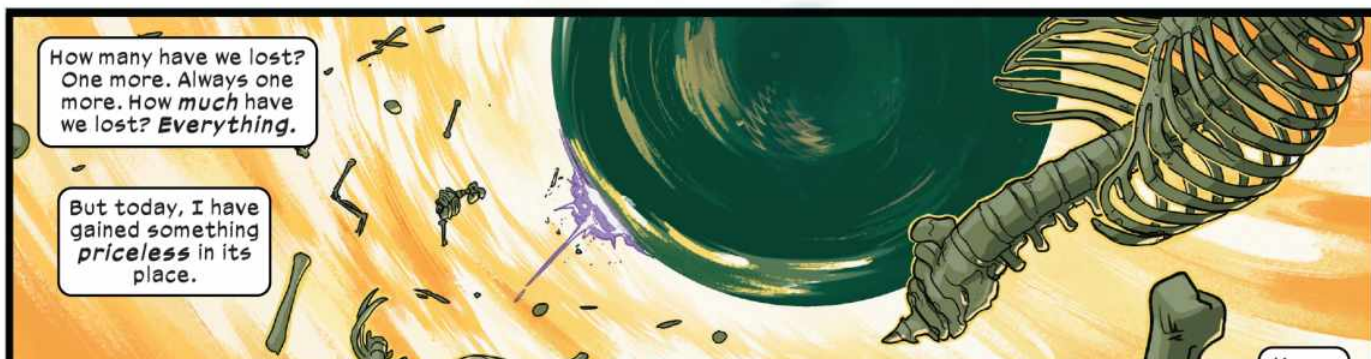
Nightkin! Look
upon your sire! Look how
low this world brought
the greatest
of you!

Look on
your shame
and be grateful to
the Mother who
guides you!



The Spark
is whatever
I say it is,
holy fool.







Because when the Mother's *lantern* touched me back there in her temple--one tiny *piece* of the Reliquary--to-be--I heard a voice.

Mama...

TZZT



...I'm still here...she lied... I never went anywhere...

She has me, Mama.



BAMF

So let this hateful universe *seethe* with pride and vengeance and ambition and--ohhh--all those *other* brief flames that will eat themselves.

There is a new *Spark* in the firmament.

My rage will burn with love. Love for my child. Love for my people. Love that will wait as long as it must, to set them free.

Love that will last a thousand years.

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SINS OF SINISTER CHECKLIST



YEAR 10

YEAR 100

YEAR 1000

SINS OF SINISTER #1

STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD
OF MUTANTS #1

NIGHTCRAWLERS #1

IMMORAL X-MEN #1

NIGHTCRAWLERS #2

IMMORAL X-MEN #2

STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD
OF MUTANTS #2

IMMORAL X-MEN #3

STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD
OF MUTANTS #3

NIGHTCRAWLERS #3

SINS OF SINISTER:
DOMINION #1



[05_sins_of__X]
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